

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 19, and ending on page 11, line 5, with the following amended paragraph:

Returning to Fig. 4, input image is decided by a second decision means (S104). If the color decision is performed only by using the maxima and minima of R, G and B, as in the above-mentioned first decision means (S102), a color (noise) ~~different clearly difference~~ for the color to be detected is liable to be detected. Then, in order to remove the noise, the second decision means is used. For example, in order to decide whether the pixel has the color to be detected, gradation differences from R, G and B data of adjacent pixels are obtained, and the color ranges are defined on the gradation difference. Practically, in a flowchart of the second decision means shown in Fig. 6, maximum values of ~~dRmax, dGmax and dBmax~~ dRmax, dGmax and dBmax and minimum values, ~~dRmin, dGmin and dBmin~~ dRmin, dGmin and dBmin of differences dR, dG and dB of from R, G and B data of adjacent pixels have been determined beforehand. First, a variable, i, for representing a pixel is initialized to one (S1040). The variable, i, has a value of 1, 2, ..., n. Next, it is decided whether the input image data of i-th pixel satisfy following conditions of color range (S1041).

$$\begin{aligned} dR_{min} \leq dR \leq dR_{max}, \\ dG_{min} \leq dG \leq dG_{max}, \\ dB_{min} \leq dB \leq dB_{max}. \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

and

$$dB_{min} \leq dB \leq dB_{max}.$$

Only if these conditions are satisfied, the pixel is decided to have a specified color, and it is decided as a specified [[dolor]] color candidate (S1042). The differences,

dR, dG and dB, will be explained later. Further, as to the pixel, gradation differences of R, G and B data thereof from those of adjacent pixels existing in one direction are determined, and they are compared with predetermined threshold values in order to determine a position of edge in the direction (S1043). This edge detection is performed in top, bottom, right, left and oblique directions. Next, i is incremented (S1044), and if the data processing have not yet been completed on all the pixels (NO at step S1045), the flow returns to step [[S1042]] S1041 to repeat the above-mentioned steps.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 12, and ending on page 12, line 8, with the following amended paragraph:

The second decision means is explained further with reference to Fig. 7. The pixels with hatching represent on-pixels. The adjacent pixels are 5*5 pixels around a target pixel. The maxima dR, dG and dB are gradation differences between the target pixel (designated with a star mark) and the adjacent pixels. If the differences dR, dG and dB between the maxima of R, G and [[G]] B data of the adjacent pixels from R, G and B of the target pixel are in the above-mentioned ranges, the pixel is decided to be a detection color candidate. For example, if a pixel (designated with a triangular mark) has the largest R in the adjacent pixels and if the difference of the largest R from R of the target pixel exists in the above-mentioned range, the target pixel is decided as a detection color candidate. Data G and B of the other colors are also subjected to the decision similarly. Only when the pixel is decided as a detection color candidate on all the data of R, G and B, it is decided as a detection color candidate. Though, in this example, the maximum of each of R, G and B data

of the adjacent pixels is used for the decision. However, for example, the maximum of a sum of the R, G and B data may be used for the decision.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 20, and ending on page 15, line 10, with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 8 is a flowchart of the second decision means (S104 in Fig. 4). First, a variable i is reset to one for initialization (1046) (S1046), wherein i has a value of 1, 2, ..., n . Next, as to the input image data of i -th pixel, it is decided whether R-G, G-B and R-B satisfy following conditions (S1047).

$$\begin{aligned} R - [[R_{min}]] \underline{G_{min}} \leq R_i - G_i \leq R - G_{max}, \\ G - B_{min} \leq G_i - B_i \leq G - B_{max}, \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

and

$$R - B_{min} \leq R_i - B_i \leq R - B_{max}.$$

If these [[condition]] conditions are [[not]] satisfied, the i -th pixel is deleted from the specified color candidates as noise (S1048). Next, i is incremented (S1049), and if the data processing have not yet been completed on all the pixels (NO at step S1050), the flow returns to step [[S1042]] S1047 to repeat the above-mentioned steps.